

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 123763
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DRAFTED BY INT/DOTA/RSCOTT:HB
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P 272355Z MAY 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO HICOMTERPACIS PRIORITY
DISTAD MAJURO MARSHALL ISLANDS PRIORITY
INFO DNA WASHDC PRIORITY
NAVSUPSYSCOM WASH DC PRIORITY
COMMANDER ENEWETAK ATOLL PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 123763

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN, TQ

SUBJECT: SALVAGE OPERATIONS
REF. A. DISTAD MARSHALLS LTR TO BROWN AND ROOT INC. DTD
MAR 31, 1977(NOTAL); AND REF. B. TELECON DNA/OTA OF
MAY 27, 1977.
DOTA NOS. 274-TT AND 037-MS

1. FOR HICOM AND DISTAD MARSHALLS. ON MAY 12, 1977, OFF-
ICE OF TERRITORIAL AFFAIRS (OTA) RECEIVED COPY OREF A IN
CLUDED AS MATTER OF ROUTINE IN TRUST TERR. READING FILE.
THIS LETTER AUTHORIZES BROWN AND ROOT TO CONDUCT AN
UNDERWATER SURVEY AT BIKINI AND ENEWETAK LAGOONS ON BEHALF
OF MARSHALLS DISTAD AND ALSO RESERVES MV CAROLINE ISLANDS
FOR BROWN AND ROOT SURVEY USE FOR 21 DAYS COMMENCING MAY 9,
1977. BY REF B, OFFICE OF TERRITORIAL AFFIARS (OTA) INC-
FORMED THAT MV CAROLINE ISLANDS WAS IN ENEWETAK LAGOON MAY
17 WITH DIVERS OF TAYLOR DIVING COMPANY, AN AFFILIATE OF
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BROWN AND ROOT, EMBARKED. DIVERS WERE PREPARED TO DO
SURVEY AND SALVAGE OPERATIONS IN ENEWETAK LAGOON UNDER A
CONTRACT WITH DISTAD MARSHALLS DTD MAY 23, 1977. SINCE
COMMANDER ENEWETAK ATOLL WAS UNAWARE OF ANY CHANGES TO
JANUARY 16, 1976, QUOTE AGREEMENT GRANTING USE AND

OCCUPANCY RIGHTS AT ENEWETAK ATOLL TO THE UNITED STATES OF

AMERICA UNQUOTE WHICH PERMITTED COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY IN ENEWETAK LAGOON, HE DENIED PERMISSION FOR TAYLOR DIVERS TO CONDUCT ANY SURVEY OR SALVAGE IN LAGOON.

2. OTA IS CONCERNED THAT TAYLOR DIVERS MIGHT PROCEED TO BIKINI TO CONDUCT SALVAGE SURVEY OPERATIONS OF NAVY SHIPS SUNK IN LAGOON DURING WEAPONS TESTS. BECAUSE OF THE POTENTIAL HAZARDS EXISTING IN THESE SHIPS AND THE ADJACENT SEA BOTTOM AND THE FACT THAT THE U.S. NAVY RETAINS OWNERSHIP OF THESE SHIPS, NO SALVAGE SURVEY OPERATIONS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED IN BIKINI LAGOON UNTIL AUTHORIZED BY THE NAVY DEPARTMENT.

3. DIRECTOR, OTA WILL DISCUSS SALVAGE AND SURVEY OPERATIONS IN MARSHALLS WITH HIGH COMMISSIONER AND DISTAD MARSHALLS NEXT WEEK IN WASHINGTON. DIRECTOR OF TERRITORIAL AFFAIRS MRS. RUTH G. VAN CLEVE SENDS. VANCE

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